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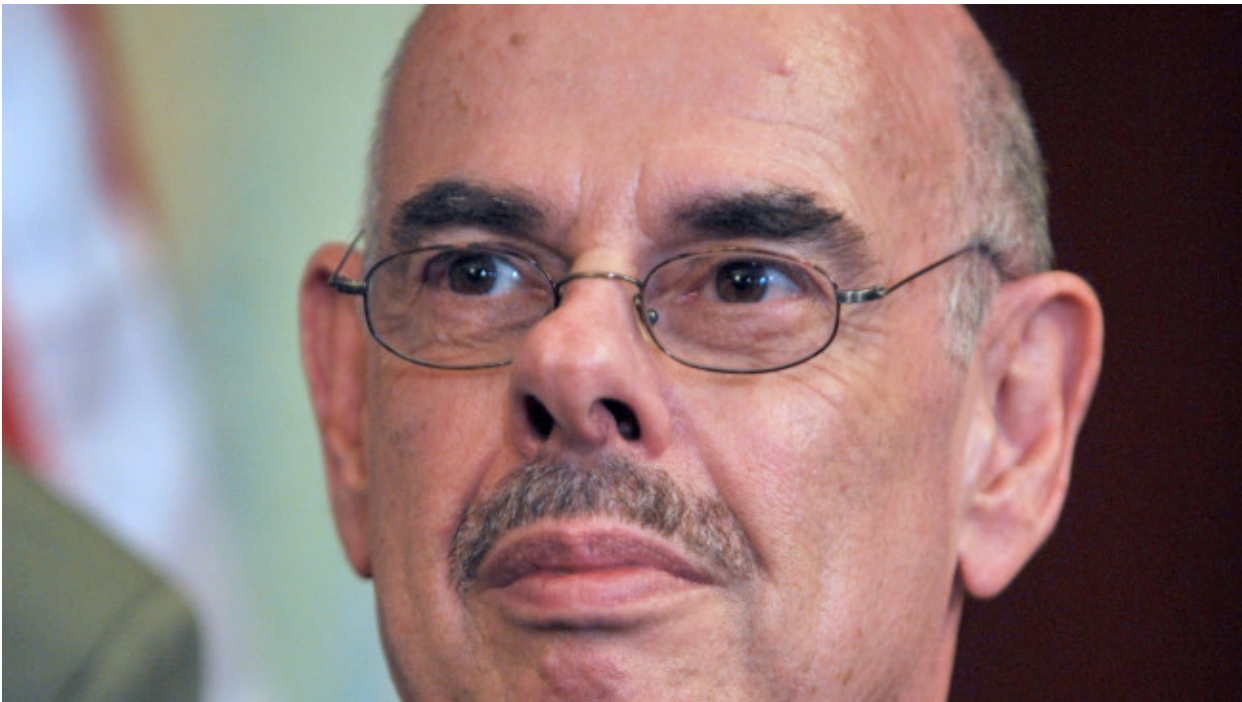
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Top House Democrat To Retire At End Of Current Session

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Newscom / Ron Sachs


[Dylan Scott](#) – January 30, 2014, 11:19 AM EST

A top House Democrat will retire at the end of the current congressional session.

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA) will step down in January 2015, he said in a statement released Thursday. He is a close ally of House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and ranking member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

"After 40 years in Congress, it's time for someone else to have the chance to make his or her mark, ideally someone who is young enough to make the long-term commitment that's required for real legislative success," Waxman said in a statement. "I still feel youthful and energetic, but I recognize if I want to experience a life outside of Congress, I need to start soon. Public office is not the only way to serve, and I want to explore other avenues while I still can."

NRCC Chairman Rep. Greg Walden told reporters he thought Waxman's retirement meant Democrats had given up on re-taking the House.



Jake Sherman
@JakeSherman

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Walden says waxmans retirement shows that Dems don't think they're winning back the house.

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Waxman anticipated this line in his statement: "And I am not leaving because I think House Democrats have no chance to retake the House. House Republicans have no compelling vision for the future. The public understands this, and I am confident that the Democrats can regain control of the House.

Waxman, who was first elected to Congress in 1974, has become well known particularly for his work on environmental issues and was one of the top House Democrats in developing the Affordable Care Act.

Update, 3:47 p.m. ET:

The White House released the following statement from President Obama:

"Early in the 20th Century, Henry Waxman's grandparents came to America, the land of opportunity, and found a place where they could build a better life for themselves and their families. Over the course of 40 years in Congress, their grandson has fought to give every American family that same chance. Thanks to Henry's leadership, Americans breathe cleaner air, drink cleaner water, eat safer food, purchase safer products, and, finally, have access to quality, affordable healthcare. Today, he continues to advocate tirelessly on behalf of Los Angeles and California as he leads efforts to address a changing climate and make sure every American has the economic security that comes with health insurance. Henry will leave behind a legacy as an extraordinary public servant and one of the most accomplished legislators of his or any era. Michelle and I wish him, his wife Janet, and his family all the best as they begin the next chapter of their lives."

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